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The Dangers of Synthetic Drugs



Parent Guide

Office of the Attorney General
for the District of Columbia



Synthetic Drugs

"Synthetic Cannabinoids"

What Are Synthetic Drugs?

Synthetic drugs, specifically synthetic cannabinoids, are a mixture of herbs, incense, and/or spices that are sprayed with mind-altering chemicals. These drugs can produce hallucinogenic effects. Even though some people call synthetic cannabinoids "fake weed," **these drugs are not a form of marijuana at all.**

The active ingredients in these drugs are synthetic chemicals that are very dangerous to the brain and other parts of the body. Because synthetic drugs are not regulated, they are not tested for safety, and users don't know what they are putting in their bodies. Please note that these drugs are easily accessible and their marketing is aimed at youth and young adults.



Dangers and what to look for:

Overdose	Loss of Consciousness
Brain Damage	High Anxiety/Panic Attacks
Severe Paranoia	Psychosis
Hallucination	Nausea and Vomiting
Acute Kidney Injury	High Blood Pressure
Convulsions	Seizures
Heart Attack	Stroke

Some Street Names Include:

Scooby Snax
Spice
BIZARRO
VA Pack
K2
WTF



The Law

Some synthetic cannabinoids are **Schedule I controlled substances**, which means they are illegal.

A person can be arrested and prosecuted for manufacturing, distributing, or possessing synthetic cannabinoids.

Pretrial Services, the Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, and other community supervision agencies in the District of Columbia now test for synthetic cannabinoids! Positive testing may impact your child's job, parole, probation, or government benefits.

Does Your Child Need Help?

If your child ingests synthetic cannabinoids and stops breathing, collapses, or has a seizure:
dial 9-1-1 immediately.

In non-emergency situations, you can get free, confidential medical advice 24 hours a day by calling the
National Capital Poison Center at 800-222-1222

For addiction resources, contact the
Department of Behavioral Health 24/7 Help Line
at 888-793-4376

If you believe a business is selling synthetic drugs, contact the
Metropolitan Police Department Anonymous Tip Line
at 202-727-9099 | 202-299-5555 or text 50411